

## **G. Instructional Program Approval and Discontinuance**

### **1. Authority and Scope**

Instructional programs at the University of Idaho, Idaho State University, Boise State University, and Lewis-Clark State College, Eastern Idaho Technical College, North Idaho College and the College of Southern Idaho are subject to the policies and procedures provided in this subsection pursuant to Idaho Code §33-107. This policy does not apply to instructional programs that are discontinued as a result of financial exigency as defined and discussed in Section II.N. of these policies.

The Board affirms that a major percentage of instructional program planning, assessment, and review rests with the institutions, both in theory and in practice. However, the Board has final authority and responsibility for how a program and the curriculum relate to other institutions, the system as a whole, and the needs of the consumers. The Board also anticipates that all postsecondary program approvals will include identifiable learning outcomes and competence measurements for graduates of their programs.

The Council on Academic Affairs and Programs (CAAP) is authorized to make recommendations on instructional program issues. The CAAP serves as the working unit of the Instruction, Research and Student Affairs (IRSA) committee at their direction and pleasure. Changes, duties, and responsibilities are at the discretion of IRSA and the Board.

### **2. Classifications and Definitions**

#### **a. Instructional Programs**

##### **(1) Academic Program**

- (a) An academic program is a systematic, usually sequential, grouping of courses (i.e., curricula) that provides the student with the knowledge and competencies required for an academic certificate, or an associate, baccalaureate, master's, specialist, or doctoral degree (See definitions in Section III E-1). There are several distinct degree and certificate programs depending upon time and orientation of the curriculum. A course or series of courses leading to an Academic Certificate of Completion is not considered an academic program for approval purposes.

##### **(b) Academic Program Components**

#### **i. Major**

A principal field of academic specialization that usually accounts for 25 to 50 percent of the total degree requirements; the concentration of coursework in a subject-matter major serves to distinguish one program from others leading to the same or a similar degree.

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ii. Minor

A body of coursework that pertains to a secondary area of academic or specialization. The coursework usually amounts to between 15 to 25 percent of the total degree requirements.

iii. Emphasis

One of two or more alternatives within the same major but usually affecting only 20 to 40 percent of the requirements in the major.

iv. Option

One of two or more alternatives within the same major; the differences between the options usually amount to 50 percent or more of the requirements in the major.

(2) Professional-Technical Programs

(a) A professional-technical program is a systematic, usually sequential, grouping of courses (i.e., curricula) that provides the student with the knowledge and competencies required for a postsecondary technical certificate, a technical certificate, an advanced technical certificate, or an associate of applied science degree (See definitions in Section III E-1). There are several distinct degree and certificate programs depending upon time and orientation of the curriculum. A course or series of courses leading to a technical certificate of completion is not considered a program for approval purposes.

(b) Option - options of a program provide alternative instructional paths to fields of specialized employment, consist of more than one specialized course, and may have a separate advisory committee. Justification is based on availability of employment requiring the optional specialized training.

b. Instructional Units

Instructional Units include: Departments, Institutes, Offices, Centers, Divisions, Schools, Colleges, Campuses, Branch Campuses, and Research Units.

3. Program Planning

The Board affirms that instructional program approval is a collaborative process, which includes the Board, its staff, the institutions, the faculty, external advisory groups, regional and specialized accreditation bodies, and other interested parties. Consistent with the Board's philosophy of institutional autonomy in matters of internal management, each institution assumes primary responsibility for the creation of new programs, and for the internal review of existing programs, which may lead to changes or discontinuance. However, the Board provides the following general expectations related to program planning:

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- a. With respect to academic programs, strategic planning permits the institutions to focus upon strengths distinctive from other institutions, and in accordance with its approved mission statement. The result is an opportunity for access to a broad spectrum of high quality programs.
- b. For professional-technical programs, strategic planning permits each institution to fulfill its role in serving the needs of its assigned service region. Input from local business and industry is expected.
- c. All existing instructional programs are reviewed systematically by the institution. The findings from these reviews permit the institutions to build program quality, respond to the needs of their constituents, and deliver cost effective and performance based programs to the citizens of Idaho.
- d. The standards for the program approval process are rigorously applied according to the Board's priorities for quality, unnecessary duplication, centrality to institutional role and mission, demand, and resource sharing.
- e. Institutional efforts are directed toward meeting those needs that are a high priority to the state.
- f. Expansion or reduction of programs and services is implemented consistent with institutional program priorities and statewide needs.
- g. Input from consumers, appropriate agencies and professional boards, (e.g., dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, etc.), and the Professional Standards Commission is expected when developing or modifying new programs.

### **4. Program Approval Policy**

Program approval will take into consideration statewide and institutional objectives.

- a. New instructional programs, instructional units, majors, minors, options, and emphases require approval prior to implementation;
  - (1) Board Approval – Board approval prior to implementation is required for any new:
    - (a) academic professional-technical program, new major, minor, option, emphasis, or instructional unit with a financial impact\* of \$250,000 or more per year;
    - (b) graduate program leading to a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.
  - (2) Executive Director Approval – Executive Director approval prior to implementation is required for any new academic or professional-technical program, major, minor, option, emphasis or instructional unit with a financial impact of less than \$250,000 per year.

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- b. Existing instructional programs, majors, minors, options, emphases and instructional units.

- (1) Changes, additions, expansions, and consolidations to existing instructional programs, majors, minors, options, emphases, or instructional units with a financial impact of \$250,000 or more per year require Board approval prior to implementation.
- (2) Changes, additions, expansions, and consolidations to existing instructional programs, majors, minors, options, emphases or instructional units with a financial impact of less than \$250,000 require executive director approval prior to implementation. The executive director may refer any of the requests to the Board or a subcommittee of the Board for review and action. All modifications approved by the executive director shall be reported quarterly to the Board. Non-substantive name or title changes need not be submitted for approval.

- c. Routine Changes

Non-substantive changes, credits, descriptions of individual courses, or other routine catalog changes do not require notification or approval. Institutions must provide prior notification of a name or title change for programs, degrees, departments, divisions, colleges, or centers via a letter to the Office of the State Board of Education.

### **5. Approval Procedures**

- a. Board Approval Procedures

- (1) Subsequent to institutional review and consistent with institutional policies, all requests requiring Board approval will be submitted by the institution as a notice of intent in the manner prescribed.
- (2) Academic requests will be forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Academic Officer shall forward the request to the CAAP for its review and recommendation. If the CAAP recommends approval, the proposal shall be forwarded to the Board for action. Requests that require new state appropriations will be included in the annual budget request of the institution and the State Board of Education.
- (3) Professional-technical requests will be forwarded to the State Administrator of the Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education for review and recommendation. The Administrator shall forward the request to the CAAP for its review and recommendation. If the CAAP and/or PTE administrator recommends approval, the proposal shall be forwarded, along with recommendations, to the Board for action. Requests that require new state appropriations will be included in the annual budget request of the Division and the State Board of Education.

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- (4) CAAP may, at its discretion, request a full proposal for any request requiring a notice of intent. A request for a new graduate program requires a full proposal. Full proposals should be forwarded to CAAP members at least two (2) weeks prior to the next CAAP meeting for initial review prior to being forwarded to the Board for approval.
- (5) As a part of the full proposal process, all doctoral program request(s) will require an external peer review. The external peer-review panel will consist of at least two (2) members and will be selected by the Board's Chief Academic Officer and the requesting institution's Chief Academic Officer. The review will consist of a paper and on-site review followed by the issuance of a report and recommendations by the peer-review panel. Considerable weight on the approval process will be placed upon the peer reviewer's report and recommendations.

### **b. Executive Director Approval Procedures**

- (1) All academic requests delegated for approval by the Executive Director will be submitted by the institution as a notice of intent in a manner prescribed by the Chief Academic Officer of the Board. At the discretion of the Chief Academic Officer, the request may be forwarded to the CAAP for review and recommendation. All professional-technical requests delegated for approval by the Executive Director will be forwarded to the State Administrator of Professional-Technical Education for review and recommendation. At the discretion of the State Administrator, the request may be forwarded to the CAAP for review and recommendation.
- (2) Requests will then be submitted, along with the recommendations, to the Executive Director for consideration and action. The Executive Director shall act on any request within thirty (30) days.
- (3) If the Executive Director denies the request he or she shall provide specific reasons in writing. The institution has thirty (30) days in which to address the issue(s) for denial of the request. The Executive Director has ten (10) working days after the receipt of the institution's response to re-consider the denial. If the Executive Director decides to deny the request after re-consideration, the institution may send its request and the documents related to the denial to the Board for final reconsideration.

### **(4) Distance Learning Delivery and Residence Centers**

All academic and professional-technical programs delivered to sites outside of the service area defined by the institution's role and mission statement shall be submitted using the process outlined above.

## **6. Official Program Listing**

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The Office of the State Board of Education will maintain the Official Program and Degree Listing of Board approved academic and professional-technical programs offered at the public institutions. Changes or modifications to the Official Program and Degree Listing require prior OSBE approval. The official program and degree listing will use the U.S. Department of Education's most current classification of instruction program (cip) codes as a tracking and approval mechanism.

**7. Criteria for Review of New Instructional Programs**

The following criteria are used for the statewide review of requests for new academic and professional-technical programs. The CAAP is responsible for maintaining the criteria to reflect the current priorities of the IRSA committee and the Board for instructional program quality, unnecessary duplication, centrality to role and mission, and resource sharing as a method for improving quality, access, cost efficiency, and outcome measures.

- a. Quality – the full proposal must include documentation that the new instructional program will be of high quality. To ensure quality programs, the institution should address the following: curriculum, faculty, students, infrastructure support, funding resources, outcome and performance measures, business and industry support and partnerships, State Licensing Board acknowledgment and other agency support where appropriate. Accreditation reviews, self-study reports, external peer-review evaluations, etc. are encouraged as part of the documentation of quality.
- b. Duplication – the institution submitting the full proposal must document that the new instructional program avoids duplicating an existing program or presents evidence that duplication is warranted.
- c. Centrality – the institution must clearly document and ensure that the new instructional program is consistent with its Board approved role and mission statement.
- d. Demand – the institution seeking a new instructional program will address student, regional, and statewide needs. In addition to access and demand, (i.e., the anticipated number of students seeking admission to the proposed program), it is important to recognize the needs of other consumers such as business, industry, and governmental agencies. Further, communication and cooperation with the appropriate standard of practice agency (e.g., licensing board), as it relates to student graduate placements and needs of the respective professions, is expected.
- e. Resources – documentation concerning cost efficiency of the new instructional program is also required before the Board can take action on the full proposal. The institution must assure the Board of effective use of resources in promoting the new program. In addition, the impact that the new program will have on existing programs at the institution, faculty, facilities, library, etc. must be addressed. The budget for the proposed program clearly

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tracks the source and amount of funds (e.g., new funds, reallocation, resource sharing with business, industry, other institutions, contract agencies, federal government, etc.).

### **8. Instructional Program Discontinuance Policy**

If in conflict, any policies of the Board of Trustees of North Idaho College, or the Board of Trustees of the College of Southern Idaho related to program discontinuance shall supersede the policies set forth herein.

(a) discontinuance of professional-technical programs requires Board approval.

(b) discontinuance of academic programs, majors, minors, options, emphases or instructional units with a financial impact of \$250,000 or more per year requires Board approval.

(c) discontinuance of academic programs, majors, minors, options, emphases or instructional units with a financial impact of less than \$250,000 requires executive director approval. The executive director may refer any of the requests to the Board or a subcommittee of the Board for review and action. All discontinuances approved by the executive director shall be reported quarterly to the Board.

### **9. Instructional Program Discontinuance Criteria and Procedures**

If in conflict, any criteria or procedures of the Board of Trustees of North Idaho College, or the Board of Trustees of the College of Southern Idaho related to program discontinuance shall supersede the policies set forth herein.

#### **a. Criteria for Discontinuance of Academic Programs, Units or Components**

The primary consideration in instructional program discontinuance will be whether the instructional program is an effective use of the institution's resources, and specific criteria supporting instructional program discontinuance will include, but will not be limited to:

(1) Quality – the institutions should address the following: curriculum, faculty, students, infrastructure, support, funding resources, outcome/performance measures, business industry support/partnerships, State Licensing Board acknowledgement, and other agency support where appropriate. Accreditation reviews, self-study reports, external peer review evaluations, etc. should also be considered when determining quality.

(2) Duplication – the institution should consider whether the program duplicates an existing program or whether there is evidence that duplication is unwarranted.

(3) Centrality – the institution should consider whether the program is inconsistent with the Board's approved role and mission for the institution.

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- (4) Demand – the institution should consider whether the program addresses student, regional, and statewide needs. In making this consideration, the institution should look at access to the program, the needs of other consumers such as business, industry, and governmental agencies, communication and cooperation with the appropriate standard practice of agency (e.g. licensing board).
- (5) Resources – the institution should consider whether the program is cost efficient and whether the program is an effective use of resources. In making this determination, the institution should consider the impact of the program on other programs, faculty, facilities, library, etc.

**b. Procedures for Academic Program Discontinuance -- Students and Employees**

**(1) Students**

Institutions shall develop policies, in accordance with the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation Handbook, requiring that arrangements be made for enrolled students to complete affected programs in a timely manner and with minimum interruptions.

**(2) Employees**

This policy does not apply to instructional programs that are discontinued as a result of financial exigency as defined and discussed in Section II.N. of these policies. Any faculty or staff members whose employment the institution seeks to terminate due to the discontinuance of a program based upon Section III.G. shall be entitled to the following procedures:

- (a) Non-classified contract employees, including non-tenured faculty, may be dismissed or have their contracts terminated or non-renewed in accordance with Board and institutional policies.
- (b) State of Idaho classified employees shall be subject to layoff as provided in the rules of the Division of Human Resources. Classified employees of the University of Idaho shall be subject to layoff as provided in the policies of the University of Idaho.
- (c) Tenured faculty will be notified in writing that the institution intends to dismiss them as a result of program discontinuance. This notice shall be given at least twelve (12) months prior to the effective date of termination.
- (d) An employee who receives a notice of termination as a result of program discontinuance is entitled to use the internal grievance procedures of the institution. The sole basis to contest a dismissal following a program closure is in compliance with these policies.



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c. Criteria for Discontinuance of Professional-Technical Programs or Components

Complete criteria and procedures related to postsecondary professional-technical program discontinuance can be found in IDAPA 55.01.02.